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THE NOTION OF HRD: A REVIEW

ROZIANA SHAARI
ROSE ALINDA ALIAS
AZIZAH RAJAB

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION ON HRD

This section presents numerous insights and effort towards defining and developing a concept of HRD. These insights have contributed to the notion of HRD itself. One cannot discuss HRD without acknowledging the various disciplines from which it has borrowed (Brooks and Nafukho, 2006).

The HRD concept emerges from the classical approach in management principles (Taylorism – scientific management), productivity improvement (Hawthorne studies – behaviorism) and teamwork and group dynamics (Tavistock Institute and T-groups). So many scholars from various fields (industrial psychology, organization behavior, management, industrial relations, engineering etc) have contributed in improving the performance of individuals, processes and organizations (Wimbiscus, 1995).

The term HRD provided by Nadler (1970) is a conceptual umbrella under which the field began to unify, using the three-fold notion of training, education, and development. Of late, HRD has its relation with organizational and performance change and also associate with a field of adult learning in the workplace Garavan et al. (1995) provides some definitions of HRD based on different notions of understanding (Table 1).





Scholar	Notion
Nadler & Nadler (1989)	Organized learning experiences provided by the employer, in a specified period of time for the purpose of increasing job performance and providing growth for individuals
ASTD (1990)	HRD includes: training and development, organization development, and career development.
Harrison (1992)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Softer phrases such as “employee development” and “training and development”- involves the alignment of training and development activities with the organization’s mission and strategic goals so that through enhancing the skills, knowledge, learning ability and motivation of employees at all levels, there will be continuous organizational as well as individual growth.

(Source: Garavan et al. (1995))

Table 1: Definition of HRD

The insights from many authors and researchers that contribute to the notion of HRD are summarized in Table 2.





Authors/Scholars	Citation	HRD Paradigm/Notion	Notes
McLagan & Bedrick (1983)		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provide HR Activity Wheel and categorize HRD components into individual, career, organization development- reflected a shift thinking in HRD work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The idea has reflected a shift thinking in HRD work- This model has been argued by Wimbiscus (1995) that the wheel does not serve as unifying model of HRD discipline- In fact, McLagan herself stated that the model is no longer relevant (McLean, 2002)- However, the model serves as a strong basis of understanding HRD. For examples, many literatures are being indirectly discussed HRD within these three areas or components (Wimbiscus, 1995; Garavan et al., 1995, 1999; Pace et al., 1991;) and the model has influenced in course development programme in the US (McLean, 2002)





Swanson (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Define HRD as a process of developing and unleashing human expertise through organization development (OD) and personnel training and development (T&D) for the purpose of improving performance.- relate HRD function to the organizational/larger context (i.e., attach into the system theory – where the HRD responsible to analyze (input), propose, create and implement (process), and access (output).- underlying theories of HRD: economic, system & psychological (3-legged stool)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Acknowledge the OD and T&D as mechanism for improving performance
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Wimbiscus (1995)	Rumler & Brache (1990), Swanson (1989, 1994a), Porter, Nadler, Tichy, Juran, Davenport, Hammer, Lawler, Campbell, Argyris	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- development of people, process, and organization<ul style="list-style-type: none">- emergence of HRD from classical approach in management principles.- use Rumler & Brache (1990) 9 cell performance variables matrix as a template to identify, classify & describe scholars' contribution to HRD- depends on model of HRD by Swanson (1989, 1994a) – a three-legged stool	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Wimbiscus design a template of 3x3 matrix to identify, classify, and describe major HRD scholars- describe specifically each of the scholars' contribution and how do they fit into the cell.- to improve or complete the original model by Rumler & Brache.- the comprehensive model offers HRD scholars and practitioners a tool which they may synthesize and integrate the work of scholars from the disciplines that support HRD.
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Garavan et al., (1995)	Porter (1985), Harrison (1983, 1992), Bratton (1992), Nadler & Nadler (1989), ASTD (1990), Guest (1999), Garavan et al., (1995), Beer & Spector (1989), Rothwell & Kazanas (1991), Megginson & Pedlar (1992)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Focus on the emergence of strategic HRD (SHRD).- HRD relates to Porter's notion of competitive advantage, human resources and strategy- Influenced by the success of Japanese companies on a highly trained and developed workforce.- Present definition/notion of HRD, SHRD, and assumption of SHRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the idea is consistent to the HRD's role of capability-driven (Luoma, 2000)
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Garavan et al., (1999)	Harrison (1997), Garavan (1991), Steward & McGoldrick (1996) Boydell & Leary (1996), Bratton & Gold (1994), Bristow & Scarth (1980), Stuart & Long (1985a, b), Sloman (1994), Saunders & Holdaway (1992), Marchington & Wilkinson (1996), Garavan et al., (1995), O'Donnell & Garavan (1997), Mumford (1997), Hammond & Willie (1991)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- no unified model, complex, problematic, lead to confusion- present dimension of HRD- models of HRD based on 3 major strands (traditional/classical, core-competency, strategic HRD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the idea is consistent with Wimbiscus (1995), Lynham (2000), Sambrook (2004), Trehan (2004)
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Lynham (2000)	Chalofsky (1996, 1998), Marsick (1990), Swanson (1997a) Weinberger (1998), Campbell (1990), Dubin (1976, 1978), Marsick (1990), Mott (1996, 1998)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of a philosophical framework to guide theory and practice in HRD. It causes tension between the researcher and the practitioner. - HRD is a relatively young profession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent with Wimbiscus (1995), Garavan et al., (1999), Sambrook (2004), Trehan (2004)
<p>Sambrook (2004)</p> <p>Sambrook (2007)</p>	<p>Blake (1995, p.2), Sambrook (1998, 2000, 2001), McGoldrick et al., (2002, p.396), Bates et al., (2001), McLean (1998), Lee (1998), Swanson (1999)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unclear concept of HRD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relates to concept of management learning - social and discursive construction - understand the purpose of HRD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus on what HRD practitioners do (action), and how they talk about what they do (all talk). - critical HRD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the idea is Consistent with Wimbiscus (1995), Garavan et al., (1999), Lynham(2000), Trehan (2004) - this idea is consistent with Rigg et al., 2007. The authors highlight that traditional HRD is multi-disciplinary (i.e., economics, behaviorist psychology and sociology) concerned and difficult to define. In addition the term of HRD evolved across the world: adult education (America), work-based training (Europe), organization development



Trehan (2004)	Mc Lagan (1983), Steward & McGoldrick (1996) McGoldrick et al., (2001), Walton (1999)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- overlapping concept among HRD, HRM, and management learning.- HRD beyond T&D- encompasses learning functions- ongoing contention to define HRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the idea is consistent with Wimbiscus (1995), Garavan et al., (1999), Lynham(2000), Sambrook (2004)
Simmonds & Pedersen (2006)	Swanson (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- define HRD beyond T&D. T&D is commonly associated with “hard” forms of HRD.- HRD is a combination of structured and unstructured learning and performance-based activities (holistic approach) which develop individual and organizational competency, capability and capacity to cope with and successfully manage change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the idea is consistent with Trehan (2004)- the idea is consistent with Wimbiscus (1995) on the idea of competitive advantage which has a significant influence on HRD formation.

Table 2: A Summary of HRD Paradigm





Although the concepts, model and definition of HRD are still ongoing, continuous attempts to investigate HRD to provide better understanding and practice is very important (Sambrook, 2007). In addition, the contribution of HRD towards the development of people, process, and organization should not be ignored.

THE PRACTICES OF HRM/D

The term of “HRM” is considered in this section, due to the possibility of overlapping concepts and practices of both “HRM” and “HRD” (Trehan, 2004). The examples of HRM/D practices presented in this section serve as a guideline and support the limitation of HRD theories itself. At the same time, the practices will add value to the understanding of the HRD scope and its major role in organizations.

HRD Practices in Other Countries

Table 3 presents a comparison of HRD model typically found in small organizations with one typically engendered through the adoption of the Investors in People (IIP) standard. The IIP may be considered as the UK’s national standard for linking training and development activities within organizations to business strategy (Hill and Stewart, 2000). The model presented does not advocate that one model is “better” than the other, just that they differ from each other. The comparison of the two models is based on the process of HRD itself.





HRD PROCESSS	SME Model of HRD Requirements	IIP Model of HRD Requirement
PLANNING	<p>HRD not seen as a core business process with minimal planning and no apparent link to organizational plans and goals</p> <p>Lack of internal HRD expertise</p>	<p>Commitment to T&D is from the top of the company and is communicated to all and there is a written, flexible business plan</p> <p>T&D needs are planned and reviewed in line with business plan and goals</p> <p>Everyone in the organization understands their role and contribution to business goals</p> <p>Responsibility for T&D is identified and understood by all</p> <p>T&D is planned at organizational, team and individual levels</p> <p>Open system – encourages link to external standards and scrutiny</p> <p>Internal HRD expertise needed/ encouraged</p>





DOING	T&D activities are ad hoc, selective and aimed at the satisfaction of immediate, job-related, problem-solving needs of individuals	T&D activities apply to the whole workforce and take place to meet organizational, team and individual needs
	Preference for on-the-job training with little emphasis on personal development	New employees and employees changing jobs receive induction training
	Individualistic model influenced by the motivation and skills of the owner/manager encouraging a closed system	All employees are made aware of T&D opportunities within the organization
	Lack of internal HRD expertise	Managers are effective in carrying out their T&D responsibilities and are involved in helping employees meet their T&D needs Employees are encouraging to identify and meet their job-related T&D needs Internal HRD expertise needed/ encouraged





EVALUATING	No apparent evaluation of T&D activities carried out	Impact of T&D activities on knowledge, skills, attitudes and performance is assessed
	Little awareness by owner/manager of costs and benefits of T&D	Impact of the contribution of T&D in meeting business goals is assessed
	Lack of internal HRD expertise	Top management understands the broad costs and benefits of T&D
		Improvement to T&D are identified and implemented
		Top management continues to demonstrate its commitment to T&D to all employees Internal HRD expertise needed/ encouraged

(source: Hill and Stewart, 2000)

Table 3: Comparison of the HRD models typically found in small organizations and Investors in People (IIP)

The size and type of organization influence the practice of HRD itself. From the comparison shown in Table 3 above, it can be said that HRD department may not exist and not be formally established within the SME organization.

On the other hand, the best practices of HR also demonstrate HRD practices in organization. Based on the IPMA HR Benchmarking, two organizations were reviewed on their success in training and development (T&D) strategies (Table 4). Even though the best practices shown are in the training and development solely, however the practices contribute to how organizations can excel in exercising their T&D function.



Organization	Characteristics that Reflect Best Practices T&D	Strategic Alignment	Structure	Function	Assessment and Transfer of Learning
Broward County, Florida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - aligns training with organizational strategy - the impact of T&D is measured by assessing skills and behaviors before and after completing the programs - shared responsibility with managers, supervisors, Employee Development and HRs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strategic goals set by the Board of County Commissioners - a business plan to achieve the goals - administrative mandates - employee performance improvement and training needs - a lifelong learning environment - changes in the work environment, technology, and innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the training function is in the Employee development section of the Human Resources Division - offers training program which is conducted on county time and paid for by the county. - coursework includes job, personal or professional skill development, as well as technical, career and promotional development - examples: generic training, mandatory training, operational training, workforce development, return to school initiatives, educational leave 	<p>The Employee development section's functions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organizational learning - process improvement - resource management - internal consulting - facilitating change - managing liability - reporting - internal/external partnering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assessment done before and after programs - employee development and HRs are responsible for the training - linking T&D to organizational needs - requires forging close working relationships with agency leadership, aligning employee performance with the agency's performance and business plan, and linking employee improvement/learning needs with performance.



Hennepin County, Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- T&D are linked to the strategic plan- On going basis of assessment- Involvement of the Employee development and the Training Manager- Strong emphasis on transfer of learning through action plans that track behavior change and through peer coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- identified competencies required to achieve the county's strategic plan- training is aligned with those competencies- identify the key competencies for directors, managers, supervisors, and all employees- training is a key retention strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- T&D reports to the Office of HRs and is aligned with a position in County Administration called Learning Community Manager (working on organizational change to make learning an integral part of county work)	<p>The main focuses of T&D are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) manager and supervisor training, support staff training and(2) training for all employees (including career development)	<p>Specific approaches of assessment includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- annual department meetings and strategic plan reviews- annual countywide strategic planning process- feedback from training partners- customer feedback- analysis of performance <p>Learning transfer occurs through action planning in each training session, peer coaching circles as support for new supervisor training, job aids, and emails to managers from the training staff.</p>
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(source: Bjonberg, 2002)

Table 4: Best Practices of Training and Development





In practice, the term “HRD” itself would not have been encountered by some industries. Moreover, some of them did not have a specific HRD department. Even if the companies did have the department, the activities covered were broader than learning and development, thus included recruitment and human resource planning (Weil and Woodall, 2005). As mentioned by Trehan (2004) these are overlapping concepts and practices between HRD, HRM, and management learning. In order to define the term, the firm’s description on activities that relate to HRD helps to express the definition (Table 5).



Industry	HRD Definition	Specific HRD's Contribution to Corporate Strategy	Notes
ElectricCo	- use the HRD term and as specific HRD department. (However, definition is not mentioned by the researcher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HR activities were important to realize business objective - the management of people was presented as the key to improving customer focus and satisfaction, competitiveness, leadership, innovation, and the implementation of change. - Employee learning and related issues were acknowledged as strategically important by all organizations, and often justifies in relation to longer term workforce planning such as increasing employee job satisfaction and motivation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all claimed that human resources were at the heart of their corporate strategy - perceived HRD function as supporting corporate strategy by providing training and other learning opportunities, and HRD was also increasingly seen as an activity that is shared with line managers and employees (indicates a move towards becoming a strategic partner) - strong resistance to outsourcing HRM in general and HRD in particular (none of the organizations expressing any interest in this)
CommunicationsCo	"... Competencies management, job management, remuneration management and training".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the priority was on the redeployment of staff following the planned job losses of 22,000 over the following three years. - had created a new internal training responsible for a massive competence development plan involving considerable use of e-learning. - has effort of moves to transform the HRD function from a cost to profit centre. - set up training centres in various business units for the purpose of centralizing training policy and maintaining a global view and control over investment in training 	



SemiconductorCo	<p>“...recruitment, integration, training and personal development..”, with an emphasis upon recruitment of high potential candidates and continuous development based upon the use of personal development plans.</p>	<p>- emphasized on aligning all HR policy globally. Has a global career management policy backed up by a global “corporate university” - set up training centres in various business units for the purpose of centralizing training policy and maintaining a global view and control over investment in training</p>	
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ChemiCo	<p>“...induction, integration, encouraging mobility and job change, managing careers on an international levels, improving individual and collective skills, changing behavior, developing future teams, motivating and rewarding staff”. The main activities were focused around a project on staff motivation, induction career management and human resource planning.</p>	<p>- Employee learning and related issues were acknowledged as strategically important by all organizations, and often justifies in relation to longer term workforce planning such as coping with an ageing workforce, or increasing job satisfaction and motivation.</p> <p>- set up training centres in various business units for the purpose of centralizing training policy and maintaining a global view and control over investment in training</p>	
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SportCo	“...induction and skill development, human resource planning, staff mobility and deployment and accreditation of learning at work”.	Employee learning and related issues were acknowledged as strategically important by all organizations, and often justifies in relation to longer term workforce	
Supermarket	- use the HRD term and as specific HRD department “...external recruitment, internal promotion, redeployment, personal development planning, human resource planning, and employee attitude surveys as well as training”.	(not stated)	

(source: Weil and Woodall, 2005)

Table 5: HRD in France





The Best Practices of HR in Malaysia

The researcher has summarized (Table 6) some of the best practices in HR being benchmarked by the National Productivity Corporation (NPC) 2003-2005. The practices are based on the descriptions of activities conducted in organizations.

Organization	Human Resource Practices	Notes
American International Assurance Company (AIG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- has strong commitment in employee personal growth and development through the provision of high quality T&D services offered by the Regional Staff Training & Development department.- all the employees strive to acquire the leadership competencies as lined up by senior management (continuously learning environment)- some of the examples of enrich T&D programmes includes: regional training (sharing of best practices between region to promote culture of continuous learning), global e-learning, corporate intranet, training and education programmes, customized training and consultation, external/functional training, resource centre, education assisted programmes, elevator talks, HR e-bulletin, weekly empowerment message, people building project, core employee development, management associate programme, individual development plan.- all the intervention at the organization level taken to promote continuous learning in order to prepare employees who will be able to adapt more readily to changing business environment and maintain their upward careers.	The practices are related to the concept of HRD as discussed before. It can be said that the key successful of HR practice for this firm is by using its HRD strategy to develop their human resources and become the best practices of HR. For example, the firm is emphasizing on continuous learning as their strategy in successfully managing HR



Petronas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - value for employees' existence and their contribution. - based on employee engagement to motivate and retain employees, such as: exercise organization's values and beliefs from top to down, challenging work opportunities (i.e. self-driven on career development, emphasized on capability driven), balanced work life (i.e. sports club, young professional club), communication (i.e. transparency and value employees' opinion), reward and remuneration (i.e. total remuneration philosophy), performance driven (i.e. 360 degree feedback for development), competency-based (i.e., skills group development programme, multi-tasking program) 	The strategy and best practice used are based on the combination of both HRM and HRD. In particular, the HRD strategy used is skill or competency development.
Matsushita or Panasonic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has strong effort in creation of continuous learning culture. - activities includes: - mindset change through structural reform (i.e. active R&D needs employees to ready to take challenge), building corporate strength based on technology and intellectual properties (i.e. encourage all employees to be innovative and be creative and apply 'adaptability'), accelerating strategic investments (i.e. provide more job opportunities and create learning opportunities for employee to learn about new technology), renewing corporate culture (i.e. to prepare employees for change), yearly corporate slogan (i.e. employees should prepare their mindset), education for employees) 	The best strategy used in this firm is continuous learning and learning is one of the main responsibility of HRD



Nestle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- activities include:- growing the young talent program, in order to improve the skills and competencies of employees	The strategy adopted is seen as similar to Matsushita and Petronas, where the secret success is underlying under the HRD strategy, i.e. continuous learning and competency development
IBM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- activities include:- top talent program (identify its HR role to achieve the goals, i.e. capabilities building – talent, leadership, innovative climate, high performance, HR capability)	The strategy adopted is seen as similar to Matsushita and Petronas, where the secret success is underlying under the HRD strategy, i.e. continuous learning and competency development





KPJ Healthcare Berhad	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- leadership in nursing management, i.e. nursing career pathway program, monitoring systems on the success of the programs, strategic alliances and attachment program to give international exposure and experience, job rotation, on-the-job training, quality standards program	The strategy used in the firm is competency development, but it emphasizing more on the leadership or management development. The strategy is closely aligned to its main business, i.e., nursing.
The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- activities include:- cross-functional teams, human resources policies and practices (i.e. employees' involvement, effectiveness and productivity), cross-training and job rotation, job enlargement, quality education and training	The practices are related to the concept of HRD as discussed before. It can be said that the key successful of HR practice for this firm is by using its HRD strategy to develop their human resources and become the best practices of HR. In particular, the HRD strategies used are related to education, training and development.





Telekom Malaysia (TM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- has a framework of HR operating, which defines the roles of HR at group and operating companies. It also means to reduce operating costs, such as outsourcing HR supporting and administration activities	Has clear model of HR operating systems but the firm does not present detail examples of HRD practices
Samsung SDI(M) Bhd	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- activities include:- improvement and efficiency by rationalization (i.e. system and corporate communication), stabilization of working rationalization (i.e. implementing employees benefits program, career development plan), learning organization (i.e. enhancing capacity to learn, adapt and change)	The strategy adopted is seen as similar to Matsushita and Petronas, where the secret success is underlying under the HRD strategy, i.e. continuous learning and competency development
Intel Malaysia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- set up an employee development system (EDS), technical competency, up-skilling the manufacturing employees engineering knowledge, management development (i.e. decision making workshop)	The strategy adopted is focusing on skill or competency development for employee and management.



Infineon Technologies Malaysia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - activities include: - skills and KM initiatives (i.e. shared values: 'never stop thinking'), self-managed team and small group activities to support KS, CoP (i.e. forum), reward system (i.e. knowledge and skills database). 	Focus on developing knowledge workers with support of continuous improvement to become a learning organization. The HRD strategy and role used is closely related to facilitate learning
Motorola (M) Sdn Bhd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the alignment of information management, performance measurement and operational indicator systems are achieved at every level of the personnel commitment process. - activities include: work system (i.e. employee education, training and development, employee motivation and well being), leadership supply and planning (i.e. performance management system – personal commitment), emphasized on people talent. 	The practices are similar to Ritz-Carlton and the strategies used are associated with education, training and development.

Table 6: Best Practices in Human Resources

To summarize, the HRD practices by most of the best practices firms in Malaysia is similarly related to the basic traditional model by Nadler (1970) which highlighted that HRD comprises of education, training and development. The development refers to both individual (including career development) and organizational level.



CONCLUSION

Various theoretical and practices on HRD presented reveal that there is no solid model or definition about what HRD is. However, based on the current HRD practices it can be concluded that most of the practices are greatly underlying on the well known model by Nadler and McLagan. Again, HRD is strongly related to training, education and development. Although McLagan stated that her model is no longer reliable, but the model has great influence on the HRD practices and are still being used by many researchers and authors. Thus, HRD is still seen as integrated model of training and development, career development and organization development to improve individual effectiveness.

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